

## **PEACE: A KEY TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT**

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The issue about the attainment of peace has always been the topic of most people ever since. Much have been said about it, even more has been done, but in a world full of opposing viewpoints, ideas and differences, it is very hard as to what, why and how do we do something about it. As a student and a member of the society, it is also our task and concern to help build a society that is peacefully and harmoniously moving into a better future.

Peace is the absence of conflict and violence. It describes a society or a relationship that is operating harmoniously without violent conflict and chaos. For a society to prosper and progress, peace is the key for it to work as it is said that peace is the key for development. Peace can be attained, it is just a matter of loving yourself first and has peace within your minds and hearts so that what you could give back to others are love, respect and peace.

Our focus is on every individual and how they relate with one another and to other groups of people. That is why if there is one skill we can acquire to counter terror, violence, and war, it is dialogue. Dialogue is an interchange of ideas and search for understanding of ourselves with one another. We should have considerable insights on how to practice dialogue until it becomes a habitual pattern of our behavior and communication. Secondly, we should have respect for one another. Respecting and understanding each other's differences would provide healthy and harmonious relationships with other people. We all lived in a society of different people, aspirations, religion, dialects and culture that is why conflicts and indifferences are inevitable. Hence, respect and understanding of these differences would help us be conscious and be sensitive to others and be open-minded. Cooperation is also important in achieving peace. We could live and work harmoniously if we cooperate with one another. As it is said, two heads are better than one.

Freedom is also a major key to peace. Oppression, harassment and injustice would lead to conflict and violence. That is why there should be freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom for equal opportunity for education and personal equality, freedom from fear and intimidation. Justice is also connected to peace in a way that we are able to free the truth, as Thomas Aquinas once said peace is the product of justice.

Even though I am still a student, I can also do something for the society by starting with myself. By joining peace advocacy organizations, and campaigning for peace and unity movements that will inspire and empower civic activities for a culture of peace. I could help influence other people to do so because our goal is to enlighten the minds, respect each other's differences prevent and resolve conflicts and promote unity and understanding among us.